

Maine Department of Conservation
Bureau of Parks and Lands

DOWNEAST REGION PLAN – PUBLIC MEETING ON FINAL DRAFT

December 12, 2006, 6:00 – 9:00 pm

Cherryfield American Legion Hall

Advisory Committee Members Present

Ashby Bladen, Friends of Tunk, Downeast Rivers
Diano Circo, Natural Resources Council of Maine
Bill Cherry, Forester, Machias River Watershed
Gary Dowling, Downeast Trail Riders
Sterling Fitzhenry, East Stream ATV Riders
Sherman McCaslin, East Stream ATV Riders
Charlie Hitchings, Abutting landowner
Charlie Corliss, ATV Maine, LURC
Judy East, Washington County Council of Governments
Sally Jacobs, Sunrise Trail Coalition

22 Other Members of the Public were in attendance

Staff to the Committee

Dave Soucy, Director, BP&L
Brooke Wilkerson, Maine Natural Areas Program
Tom Charles, BP&L, Chief of Silviculture
Vern Labbe, BP&L, Northern Region Manager
Chuck Simpson, BP&L, Eastern Region Manager
George Powell, BP&L, Director, Boating Facilities Division
Scott Ramsay, BP&L, Director, Off-road Vehicles Division
Joe Wiley, BP&L, Wildlife Biologist
Rick Jordan, IF&W, Regional Biologist
Rich Bard, IF&W, Biologist
Greg Burr, IF&W, Biologist
John Titus, BP&L, Management Plan Coordinator

Welcome – *Dave Soucy*

Summary of Plan Process – *John Titus*

Powerpoint Tour of Areas of Interest in the Downeast Region Plan – *John Titus*

Public Comment Period – *Dave Soucy and Staff*

- The Donnell Pond Unit offers the only multi-day backpacking opportunity in the entire region, and you may be missing out on that opportunity.
 - Response: we don't think anything we've committed to in this plan will impact negatively that opportunity.
- We are concerned about how "park like" the Bureau will get in managing the Schoodic Beach area under the Developed Class I allocation.
 - Response: the term "park like" is used in the plan to describe an aesthetic quality resulting from management activities in areas where there is significant public use. In relation to Schoodic Beach, the term is in reference to how the Bureau

will manage the existing public use, and does not imply access or facility development beyond its current level.

- The Developed Class I allocation is going to allow you to develop camping facilities such as hookups and provide road access to the beach.
 - Response: The Developed Class I allocation for Schoodic Beach is appropriate due to the concentration of day use and camping that takes place in this area. This area will continue to be accessed only by foot or water, except for administrative purposes. Boaters comprise a high percentage of the use on both Schoodic and Redmans Beach.
- We would like to have input when you get ready to develop the campsite on the outlet of Tunk Stream. There are adjacent wetland areas that need to be protected and are being impacted from the site's use by fishermen. You should stay on the uplands, and not the nice mossy area along the stream bank.
 - Response: We would be glad to consider your concerns. The regional office will have responsibility for implementing improvements on the Unit. You can contact them regarding your possible involvement.
- A grant received for enhancements on the Blackwoods Scenic Byway could help develop some of the hiking trail opportunities from the Byway. You should talk with the Byways Committee to see what we can do to help.
- What are your plans for boat launching on Spring River Lake?
 - Response: The Plan states we will commit to providing an area that permits the same level of trailered boat launching that has occurred in the past. The area informally used for this now on the south end of the lake has runoff problems and is very tight. It is currently "rented" on a seasonal basis as a private campsite – an arrangement that predated the state's acquiring the property. We are committing to the same on Long Pond to alleviate the current safety problems on Route 182, providing for the same level of access and use that has occurred in the past.
- With the Calais Branch/Sunrise Trail being approved as a multi-use trail, we are now looking at all of the trail systems in the region, and how our trail might connect to them. The trail has not received its official name as of yet, but we are close.
- Where do you see the trail connections occurring between the Calais Branch and other motorized trail systems?
 - Response: No motorized trail will be permitted in the area east of Donnell Pond. We may be able to provide a connection west of Fiery Mountain and Little Pond, although this will require some combination of both private and public lands to make this possible.
- It will be very important to provide at least one connector trail from the Calais Branch in the Donnell Pond area to the ATV trail system to the north.
- Will there be motorized trail access to Little Pond?
 - Response: Yes, although the trails to this and Fiery Mountain will be limited to the edge of the riparian zone around the pond and on the mountain top, at which point you would park and walk. (There is clarity needed in the Plan on this recommendation, as the remainder of the parcel would be managed as a Remote Recreation Area)
- Have you received inquiries from 4WD users?
 - Response: Not yet, although we acknowledge that ATV'ers have taken unfair criticism from damage caused by 4WDs. Statewide the Bureau is doing a better job managing ATV use, mostly because local people and clubs are helping out. We can't possibly provide enough enforcement and presence to deal adequately with the problem. This does not apply to just ATV use.

- A multi-day backpacking trip could also take place on the Cutler Unit, if you include the state's ownership in Whiting.
- LURC is looking at or anticipating permit applications for private boat launch development in the Donnell Pond area. If a public launch is to be built on Spring River Lake and Long Pond, these applications would not have to be considered. The public launches would have to be built soon to avoid this issue.
- I really liked the "diplomatic" definition of "Downeast" in the Plan.
- The Town of Columbia's Resource Protection District in the town's portion of the Great Heath should be mentioned as this has been important an effort on behalf of the town and landowners to preserve the Heath.
- What is your policy on granting ATV use permits?
 - Response: This is handled out of the regional office, and you should contact them regarding your questions..
- We are happy to hear the Bureau committing to improved boat launching on Spring River Lake and Long Pond; however, in order for DIF&W to continue its' stocking program, efforts to improve these sites need to be made relatively soon. Waiting 4-5 years would be too long. DIF&W can and does stop stocking of fish where there is not equal and equitable access.
- When you stop stocking this is when people start doing illegal things.
- The plan states there is interest in horseback riding trails. Where is this coming from?
 - Response: We have heard this through our Community Grants Program, from equestrian interests who participate on a standing committee as part of the Recreational Trails Grant program. They have asked about this on a general basis on several occasions. The Bureau has indicated its willingness to work with this group if there is enough interest and local help. Riding trails require much planning, and often require more intense design and development work than other trails as there can be considerable impact from their use.

Meeting adjourned at 8:45 p.m.